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News with Neumann



As I transition back into my Area Conservationist position, I would like to express my gratitude to all NRCS employees and the partnership for making my time serving as Acting State Conservationist an enjoyable one. The position brought many challenges, but with the help of staff and partners, we were able to successfully accomplish our mission of helping people help the land.



*Kimberly Neumann,
Acting State Conservationist*



My time as Acting State Conservationist ends January 2nd. Roger Kult, Assistant State Conservationist for Operations, will serve as the Acting State Conservationist and Susan Meadows will serve as the Acting Assistant State Conservationist for Operations. Jill Reinhart will serve as Acting ASTC-Farm Bill Programs now that Teresah Caire has taken a new position with NRCS Operations and Evaluation in Fort Worth. We are in good hands with these leaders and the continued great guidance from the rest of the Leadership Team.



Staff that do not have a competency assigned were required to develop an Individual Development Plan in AgLearn by January 1, 2013. Thank you to all employees for completing their Individual Development Plans in a timely manner.



We will not be hiring any new students for this coming summer, but are committed to the 5 currently on board. Based on the number of students that are now in the system we have decided to take a year off and take a closer look at the new Pathways Program so that we can consider the benefits of hiring new graduates as the new program allows.



I want to personally thank the leadership team and public affairs staff for all your extra effort in putting together a wonderful reception for Chief White's retirement. While there was a relatively short time to pull this together, you did a great job and Chief White was both surprised and honored.



The state office has a new meeting room located in the hallway across from the main conference room (old soil survey storage room). This new meeting room is named "Miami" after the Indiana State Soil.

***** Employee Spotlight *****

Roger Williams, Engineering Technician—Greensburg Technical Team



Q: You began working for the federal government 50 years ago! Were all 50 years dedicated to NRCS? What has been the most challenging aspect of the job for you over those years?

I worked for the U.S. Forest Service during the summers of 1961/62. While there, I did a bit of everything from fire tower lookout duty, to bear dropping removal. I attended Ball State during the winter, but eventually joined the U.S. Air Force after I discovered skipping class had a down side.

I came out of the Air Force in fall of 1966 and was hired on as a temporary employee with SCS by Avanelle Olsloger, Area Clerk, as a rod man with the Salamonie Watershed Survey Team in Jay County. In spring of 1967, I was hired full time as a Soil Conservation Technician for Union County.

As for the challenging part, which I also consider fun, is finding the job site. I have turned around in more driveways, intersections, etc. (this is also known as being LOST). The computer was also a substantial challenge; however NRCS people are swift to assist mature men howling at their key boards.

Q: What has kept you motivated to stay with NRCS for so long?

Who's motivated? We got to buy groceries! Plus, I work outside where I can get wet, muddy, cold, etc. on my own schedule. I also enjoy working with the

farmers and contractors as many have passed the "interesting people test." Last, but not least, I have been blessed with high-quality supervisors.

Q: I understand you enjoy using your ATV whenever possible. Is this your favorite "technological" improvement to NRCS over the past 50 years? What others have you seen that have helped the agency?

After years with a dumpy level and trying to find someone (or something) to hold the rod, I consider the laser level my preferred technological advancement. Coming in at an extremely close second would be cell phones, the computer, and the steel thermos.

Q: Do you have any advice for the younger NRCS staff members that hope to stick with NRCS for a while?

- Use someone else's truck when working in fields that have been spread with sewage sludge.
- Always be kind to the Area Clerk; when you mess up your time sheet, or run out of note book paper, you will know why consideration is wise.
- Don't "cool" off in front of the fans at a confined hog operation.
- Always carry doggie treats – handy tool #1.
- Enjoy the experience; NRCS is staffed with some genuinely outstanding people.

Q: What do you do in your spare time when you're not working for NRCS?

The pleasure for both my wife and me is spending time with our two grandsons, Thomas and Josh. Josh is 10 and keeps us busy, Thomas is 13 and interested in same stuff as I am. I'm also working to obtain my journeyman's ticket in organic ice sculpture.

Hoosier Happenings

KUDOS to...

A heartfelt thank you goes out to **Beth Clarizia, Jerry Roach, Neil Deckard, Jeff Coats, Bill Lambert, Mary Jo Woodruff, and Theresa Hadley** for all of their assistance in keeping the easement programs running this summer while I was on maternity leave. Their tireless efforts are greatly appreciated by me and my family. **Submitted by Brianne Lowe, Easement Program Specialist**

Kudos to **Ken Collins, State Forester**, for putting on a fantastic forestry training. Positive feedback from staff members include: "This is one of the best trainings that I have attended and I gained a lot of valuable information from the presenters and field exercises," and "I would recommend a refresher training every couple of years to help keep our skills up and allow us to see the advancement of various stages of regeneration on tree plantings and harvests." **Submitted by Shannon Zezula, State Resource Conservationist**

Special thanks to **Doris Scully, Brandy Daggett, Barry Fisher, Ignacio Avila, and Jill Reinhart** for staffing the NRCS Soil Health Exhibit at the Indiana Farm Bureau Convention. **Submitted by Becky Fletcher, State Public Affairs Specialist**

INDIANA CIVIL ENGINEER GETS PUBLISHED



Chris Ritz co-authored a journal article with USGS staff titled: **USGS Scientific Investigations Report 2012-5175: Method for Estimating Potential Wetland Extent by Utilizing Streamflow Statistics and Flood-Inundation Mapping Techniques: Pilot Study for Land Along the Wabash**

River Near Terre Haute, Indiana. The report detailed the process of determining eligibility of FEP and WRP sites. This 7-day duration study focused on a 14-mile stretch of the Wabash River and is geared to expand out into all streams having a USGS gage network. This is not just applicable to Indiana, but to all states that have frequent flooding of low lying agricultural land located in the floodplain of streams and having USGS available data. To date, Indiana NRCS GIS staff and Chris Ritz have developed GIS layers for 150 miles of Indiana streams utilizing this method. Congratulations Chris for being published!

ADAMS COUNTY SERVICE CENTER GIVES BACK

The Adams County USDA Service Center committed to giving rather than receiving for the holidays by sending stockings to our troops. The team donated \$140 to fill 4 stockings with toiletries, sunscreen, chapstick, hand wipes, batteries, gum, socks, games, nuts, fruit snacks, flavored water packets, and a personal greeting card to thank them for their service. The stockings were mailed out on November 30th to bring joy to our servicemen during the holidays. The stockings were so well received, there are already plans to expand our efforts next year.

LENGTH OF SERVICE AWARDS RECIPIENTS

50 Years—Roger Williams

40 Years—Jack Johnson

35 Years

Elana Cass, Asghar Chowdhery, William Elliott, Dale Ficklin, Daniel Rosswurm

30 Years

Sue Anderson, Kenneth Collins, Julie Smith

25 Years

Eddy Adams, Kevin Chastain, Richard DePoy, Tom Held, David King, Amy Lybarger, Susan Meadows, Ruth Montgomery, Jerry Roach, Doris Scully, Victor Shelton

20 Years

Mark Cambron, Mike Cox, Denise Held, Kerry Smith, Tamara Swihart, Jennifer Vogel

15 Years

Deb Duley, Kathy Judd, Jennifer Kipper

10 Years

Benjamin Ashbaugh, Stephen Chapman, Jennifer Chen, Brandy Daggett, Daniel Davis, Pamela DeVoss-Sherrard, Clint Harrison, Dustin Ingram, Curtis Knueven, William Lambert, Amie Lester, Deiter Markland, Miranda McGillem, Matthew Patton, Jill Reinhart, Terry Roser, Chris Smith, Scott Wagner, Mary Jo Woodruff, John Young, Robert Zupancic

5 Years

Hillary Barnhart, Adam Conklin, Tandy Easler, Adam Jones, Timothy Kiste, Troy Manges, Jason McKittrick, Jeremy Palmer, Shannon Pierce, Kevin Shide, Travis Walters

**** SPECIAL EMPHASIS ****

CIVIL RIGHTS COMMITTEE UPDATE

We would like to welcome Indiana NRCS' new Civil Right Committee and Special Emphasis Program Leaders!



Human Resources Manager
Shannon Pierce



South East Civil Rights Manager
Kathy Judd



Asian American/Pacific Islander SEPM
Akhtar Soomro



Federal Women's SEPM
Brianne Lowe



Disability SEPM and Veteran's SEPM
Evan Smith

Partnership Links

IN Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts, Bi-Weekly

Updates: www.iaswcd.org/whatsnew/index.html

IN Conservation Partnership: www.iaswcd.org/icp/index.html

IN Dept. of Environmental Management: www.in.gov/idem

IN Dept. of Natural Resources: www.in.gov/dnr

IN State Dept. of Agriculture, Division of Soil Conservation:

<http://www.in.gov/isda/soil/>

Purdue University: www.purdue.edu

USDA Farm Service Agency: www.fsa.usda.gov

Hoosier Happenings (cont.)

WASHINGTON COUNTY WINS ANNUAL EARTH TEAM VOLUNTEER AWARD

The Earth Team was established in 1981 when Congress passed legislation allowing the NRCS to use volunteers in all of its programs. During Fiscal Year 2012, approximately 1,526 Indiana Earth Team Volunteers donated almost 24,000 hours of their time. This work added more than \$522,960 (or nearly 9 staff years) in resources to support conservation activities in over half of the field offices around Indiana.



Tom Godfrey, Washington County Supervisor demonstrates the soil infiltration test

The Indiana NACD/NRCS Earth Team Volunteer award is presented annually by the USDA-NRCS to a team of deserving Soil and Water Conservation District supervisors, conservation partnership staff, and Earth Team volunteers. The 2012 Indiana Earth Team Volunteer Award goes to Washington County SWCD and NRCS Staff.

Soil health was a high priority in Indiana in 2012 and is now a NRCS national priority. The need for education and outreach takes time and in a field office dealing with a heavy Farm Bill program workload, getting the word out about soil health is not always a top priority.

In response, Washington County SWCD developed a Soil Health Group to offer opportunities to a wide sector of individuals in the area. These opportunities spanned from youth to urban homeowners to producers. In 2012, this group donated over 348 hours and reached over 314 individuals with the message of the importance of soil health and its impact to their community, their backyard, their company, or their bottom line.

As a result, the field office staff was able to meet their goals and objectives of addressing conservation priorities, which included 42 WHIP applications and over 45 EQIP applications with cover crops included in the application.

The Washington County SWCD has shown great initiative and leadership in supporting the soil health movement and helping NRCS accomplish its conservation goals. Congratulations on receiving the 2012 Indiana NACD/NRCS Earth Team Award!

Personnel Update

SELECTIONS FROM VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dena Marshall selected for the Resource Soil Scientist position on the Southeast Area Office Staff effective 11-18-12
Amanda Kautz selected for the District Conservationist position at the Goshen FO effective 12-2-12
Brian Musser selected for the District Conservationist position at the Angola FO effective 12-2-12
Amie Lester selected for the CIT Leader position at the Lebanon CIT Office effective 12-16-12
Dario Lee selected for the Engineering Technician position at the Salem CIT Office effective 1-13-13
Ryan Leazenby selected for the Engineering Technician position at the Rensselaer CIT Office effective 1-13-13
Charles Selfe selected for the Engineering Technician position at the Princeton CIT Office effective 1-27-13
Tiffany Justus selected for the Soil Scientist position at the Indianapolis MLRA Project Office effective 1-27-13

REASSIGNMENTS

Kevin Shide, reassigned to District Conservationist at the LaGrange FO effective 12-16-12
Teresah Caire, transferred to the NRCS Oversight & Evaluation Staff in Ft. Worth, TX effective 1-7-13

RETIREMENTS

Jerry Lake, Engineering Technician at the Albion CIT Office effective 12-28-12
Tony Tate, Soil Conservationist at the Fort Wayne FO effective 12-28-12
Scott Mynsberge, District Conservationist at the Portland FO effective 12-29-12
Sam St. Clair, District Conservationist at the Warsaw FO effective 1-3-13

RESIGNATION

Deanna Robison, Soil Conservationist at the Versailles FO effective 11-30-12

Mark Your Calendar

JANUARY

8: Northeast Area Meeting
SAC/FAC Meeting
9: Southeast Area Meeting
10: Technical Staff Meeting
15: Fort Wayne Farm Show
16: EWP Newburgh Levy Celebration
22: Area Conservation Meeting
IFEC Meeting
HORT Congress
23: Leadership Team Meeting
State House Conservation Day
24: Soil Scientists Meeting
28: Technical Staff Meeting
29: Northwest Area Meeting
31: Engineers Meeting

FEBRUARY

1: Northern Grazing Conference
5: Northeast Area Meeting
12: SAC/FAC Meeting
13: Southeast Area Meeting
25: Technical Staff Meeting
26: Northwest Area Meeting
27: Southwest Area Meeting

MARCH

4: Southwest Area Program Review
5: Northeast Area Meeting
12: SAC/FAC Meeting
13: Southeast Area Meeting
25: Technical Staff Meeting
26: Northwest Area Meeting

You can find up-to-date information about upcoming events on the Indiana SharePoint site at:
<https://nrcs.sc.egov.usda.gov/central/in/Lists/Calendar/calendar.aspx>